

**Miller and Walker Creek Basins Public Meeting  
October 2, 2003  
Criminal Justice Training Center**

Public – 33 participants  
KC and Partner Agency staff – 14 participants

**Meeting Questions/Discussion Items/Comments from the Public**

Q: -- Regarding our statement that erosion is not a significant problem in the Miller and Walker basins, are we measuring sediment accumulation at facilities, that is removed as part of ongoing maintenance?

A: -- Ambaum Pond does not require an excessive amount of maintenance. Normandy Park cleans out the sediment accumulated at 13<sup>th</sup> Ave SW twice a year.

Suggestion – Keep more formal track of sediment depths removed from facilities.

Q: -- What are the potential methods to reduce scouring? What are the estimated costs?

A: -- Method is to increase detention. Costs could be borne by developers for new development (regulatory approach), and/or they could be borne by local governments or agencies to construct regional detention facilities. Some combination or hybrid of these is likely. Don't have costs yet.

Q: -- How do we protect the headwater wetlands from pollutant sources, whether they are outfalls from large upstream areas or commercial point sources of contamination?

A: -- Bog Protection Standards could be applied to the resource, and water quality treatment could be required for pollution-generating activities. Note – Water quality treatment of stormwater was not required when the majority of the basin was initially built out, so water quality treatment is generally non-existent in the basin.

Comment - One participant was concerned that the Project Team might be focused on the “cheap solutions” rather than the “right solutions”

Response – We are not looking at “cheap solutions”, but we must look at “cost-effective” solutions. At some point, we must also look at “implementable” solutions.

Comment – Normandy Park Community Club is proceeding with a stream enhancement (salt marsh restoration) project. They have their required permits and are ready to go. They are concerned about pollutants coming from upstream, and that their work will be of little benefit if measures are not taken upstream.

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Response – We are interested in finding out more about the scope of this project, and how this work might complement potential restoration projects recommended through the basin plan. Mason Bowles will follow up with Community Club members or permitting authorities to learn more about the project.

Comment: The presentation pointed out that the City of Normandy Park is doing work on the 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South Culvert, and that this would help some of the drainage-related problems. A concern was expressed that the work that is being done by Normandy Park is only an emergency fix, and that it is not a long-term solution.

Comment – The headwater wetlands are mapped incorrectly.

Response – King County staff are aware that all of the wetlands are mapped much smaller than they actually exist and will recommend that changes in wetland mapping be made.

Q: – Based on public discussion, this particular wetland used to extend to 168<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, which is even larger than County staff were aware of. This was apparently changed dramatically during airport construction and during SR509 construction. How did these activities affect the hydrology of the basin?

A: – We're not sure. We'll investigate this matter further.

Comment – One participant was under the impression that the Port would be piping Miller Creek.

Response – The Port representative on the PMT noted that this is inconsistent with what is in the Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan (CSMP) and that this impression is inaccurate.

Q: – If the basin plan looks at stormwater detention, can it look at vaults as well as ponds?

A: – Yes, vaults are an option (the Port's facilities will be a combination of ponds and vaults), but they are about twice as expensive as ponds.

Q: – The notes commented that current water quality data (chemistry) is lacking. How do we think we will fill these data gaps? What about using water quality data loggers? Also, in terms of water quantity data, there are lots of good flow monitoring technologies available if current flow monitoring data is also inadequate.

A: – Agreed, there are lots of good technologies for gathering flow monitoring and water quality data. One of the recommendations of the basin plan is very

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likely to be to develop and implement a flow monitoring and water quality monitoring plan for Miller and Walker Creeks.

Q: – Several public participants that live on or near the Creeks noted large surges in flows in the Creeks in periods when there were not storms or precipitation (middle of August on Walker Creek was one time). If this happens again in the future, what should these citizens do?

A: – County staff will go back to see if data exists that might confirm this and help determine the causes of the increased flows. In the future, citizens should contact their local jurisdiction to report this type of event.

Comment – This basin planning process (for Miller and Walker Creeks) began 10 years ago. In order for it to be successful, honesty and creative solutions will be required.

Comment – While fish resources are important, one participant was concerned that the plan would be boiled down to a price tag per potential fish returned, without looking at the entire ecosystem and the benefits to it.

Response – We agree that the plan should be more than a cost per fish analysis and the plan will reflect an ecosystem approach, although basic ecosystem data is sorely lacking.

Comment – Some participants were concerned that the brunt of the work to improve the basin(s) would fall to Normandy Park because they are the furthest downstream, and because they are less built out, and may actually have land on which to implement improvement projects. Burien and SeaTac are fully built out, and may not have space. Why should Normandy Park have to clean up everyone else's messes?

Response – The plan is in no way suggesting that Normandy Park should be unfairly burdened with costs or responsibilities. All of the project partners need to work together to improve conditions in the basins.

Comment – Reconstruction of an estuary on the Normandy Park Community Club is a fantasy that will not happen as long as the one vote veto is in place. The Community Club is committed to stream and salt marsh restoration, however.

Q: – In looking at stream water quality, is the project team considering conducting a B-IBI, rather than conducting discrete water quality sampling and analysis?

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A: – Mason Bowles, King County Ecologist, gave a brief overview of the B-IBI methodology. He also noted that B-IBI had previously been conducted for Miller Creek. He is looking for the source of that data. It shows Miller Creek at the bottom of the scale. The use of B-IBI will be considered by the project partners during development of recommendations.

Q: – What is the schedule for the plan?

A: – By the end of this year, a Draft Plan. In early 2004, more public involvement and a Final Plan.

In November and/or December 2003, the next round of public meetings, corresponding with the Draft Plan development.

Q: – What were the modeling assumptions about the Port's facilities – in vaults or not in vaults?

A: – It was modeled as reflected in the CSMP. This is a combination of vaults and ponds.

Note – The project partners have requested that the modelers perform an additional modeling run that presumes that the third runway and its resulting stormwater facilities are not constructed.

Q: – One participant said they had heard that the City of Burien was going to be imposing 100 ft buffers along streams. Is this likely to be the new standard?

A: – This is probably more detailed than the plan recommendations would get. This is more of an implementation detail. At this point, the plan is not contemplating specific land-use restrictions.

Q: – What are the metrics for success of this plan? How will we measure success?

A: – This is a tough question. Our goals are for “improvements” in water quality, in fish production from improved habitat, and in reduced flooding and erosion. Baseline data is non-existent or poor for several of these goals, and the plan will likely recommend monitoring to establish a baseline that the improvements can be measured against. The timelines for seeing improvements from many of these projects is decades long. Some projects may show results in 5 – 10 years. It really depends on what is implemented and how aggressively it is undertaken. The plan recommendations will have limited areas of influence. Specific numeric targets are pretty unrealistic when you can only impact portions of a problem.

Comment – One participant was concerned about de-icing chemicals and their impacts on stormwater – with or without the third runway.

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Comment – One citizen expressed concern over the potential impacts to the ecosystem if the earthen wall that the Port has proposed to build fails.

Response – This particular issue is a seismic stability issue and, although it is certainly a valid concern, it is not within the scope of the basin plan to perform engineering studies on the Port's earthen embankment.

Comment – One citizen was concerned that the presentation did not directly address the impacts that the port has or has historically had on the basins.

Response – There is no question that the Port's development has had impacts on the basins. It is also true, however, that all of the other development in the basins has also caused impacts. Highways, roads, and commercial and residential development have all contributed to the problems observed. It will take improvements on all fronts to protect and restore the basins.